



INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

13 JAN 69 15 07

OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

In reply refer to:  
I-26497/68

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13 JAN 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Kagnew Station, Ethiopia

Under Secretary Katzenbach has proposed that we continue our efforts toward the objective of reducing our presence at Kagnew in order to protect the most important functions there over the longer period (Tab A). The Services, the JCS and NSA are now conducting studies as you requested with this objective in mind. As you earlier advised Mr. Katzenbach, these studies, in particular a JCS communications study, probably will reveal that some reductions can be effected at Kagnew without degrading our [REDACTED] communications capabilities. We are not yet in a position to identify the extent of these reductions, but we will provide his staff the results of the studies as they are completed.

There are several new nuances in Mr. Katzenbach's letter with which we are not in agreement. Rather than proscribing the assignment of new functions or new construction at Kagnew as proposed by Mr. Katzenbach, which seems unnecessarily binding, I believe we should continue our present policy of requiring agreement between your respective offices of any new undertakings at Kagnew.

Mr. Katzenbach now proposes also that our planning look to an "eventual withdrawal" from Kagnew. As our earlier studies have suggested, however, we may wish to retain some of our functions at Kagnew as long as possible.

Contingency planning of course should continue against the possibility of being forced out of Kagnew. Our earlier technical studies, which you provided Mr. Katzenbach, laid out several alternative sites for the various activities now at Kagnew. The State Department has not yet commented on the political viability of these alternatives. We should press them on this point since, in our judgment, the alternative locations seem to offer no appreciably better prospects for tenure than we now have at Kagnew.

Mr. Katzenbach also suggests an annual staff report to your respective successors on the withdrawal plan. I recommend that we leave this point

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unanswered since your successors will be in a better position to judge how they want to handle the matter after they have received an assessment of the political viability of the alternatives.

A proposed response, concurred in by DDR&E and ASD(I&L), is at the signature tab.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Paul C. Markbe".

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